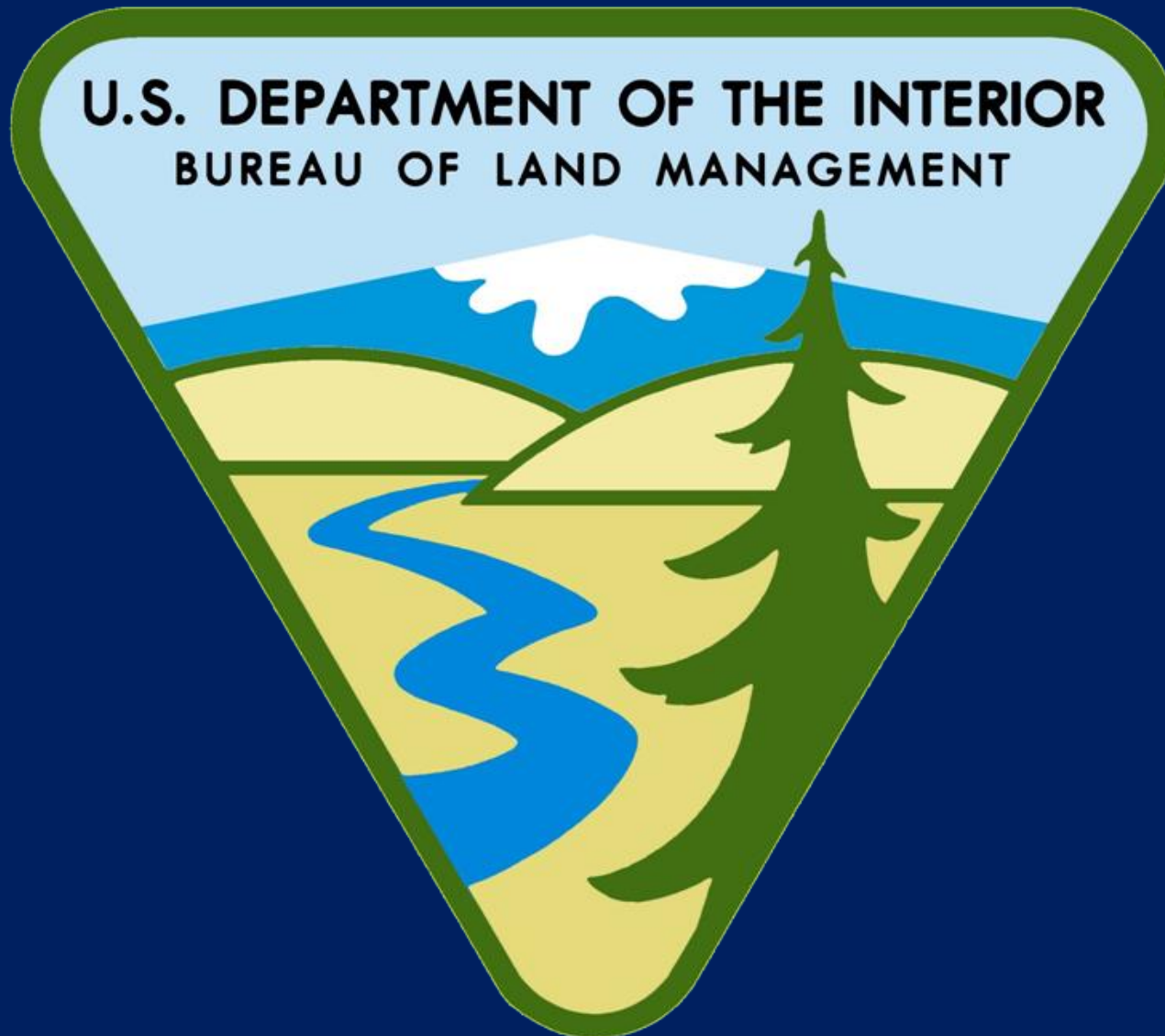


# Recreation and Visitor Services Planning for the “Human Habitat”

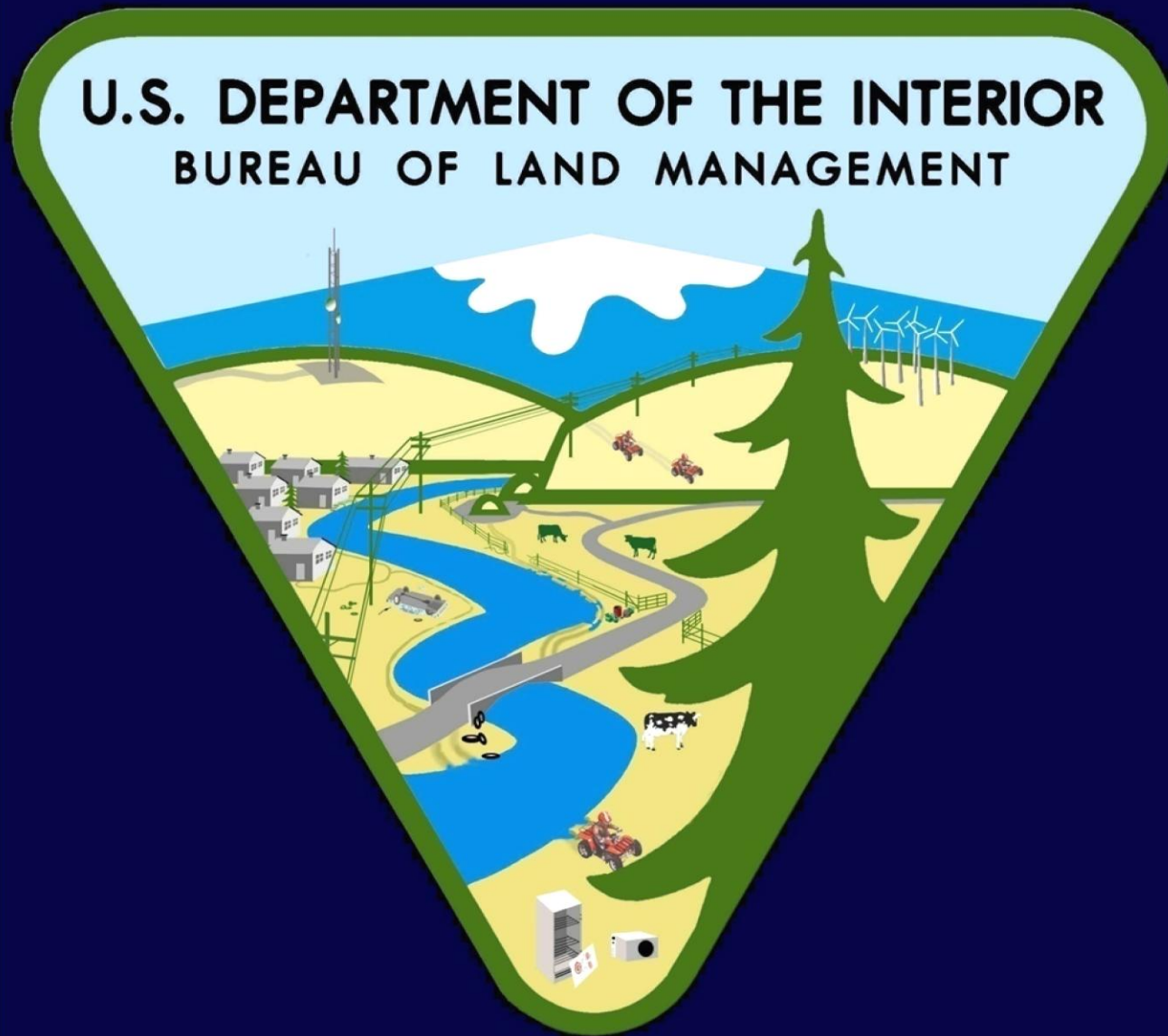


# BLM Planning in Theory





# BLM Planning in the real world...



# BLM Planning Framework

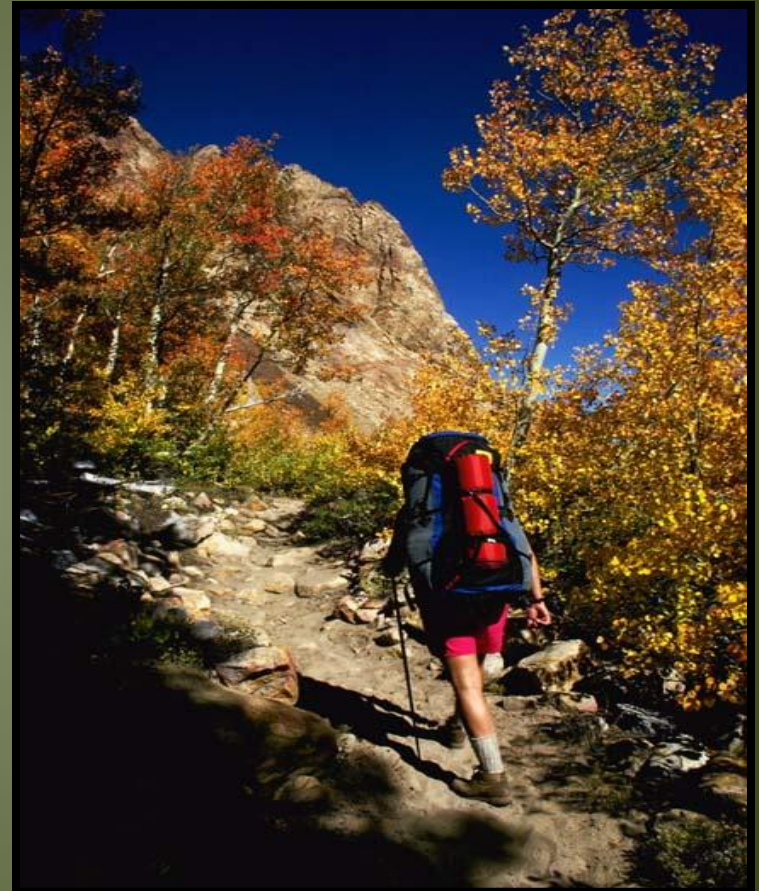
Three components of BLM planning primarily address “Human Habitat” through prescribed landscape settings:

- **Recreation Management**
- **Visual Resources Management**
- **Comprehensive Travel & Transportation Management**



# Related Programs that Plan for “Human Habitat” Needs

- **Recreation addresses components needed to manage settings** – to provide for recreation opportunities
- **VRM addresses landscape character** – to identify and maintain the aesthetic quality of the landscape
- **CTTM addresses public access** – to determine where and how people move across the landscape





# The Challenge:

## Planning and Managing Recreation in a World of Change

**Population:** growth and urbanization near public land **increases recreation demand and diversity of uses**

**Economics:** growing importance of recreation in the economy **increases business, community and political interest and influence**

**Technology:** continued advances in recreation technology **increases the pace and scope of management challenges**

**Values:** Change in public values concerning public land uses **increases public expectations for non-commodity amenities**



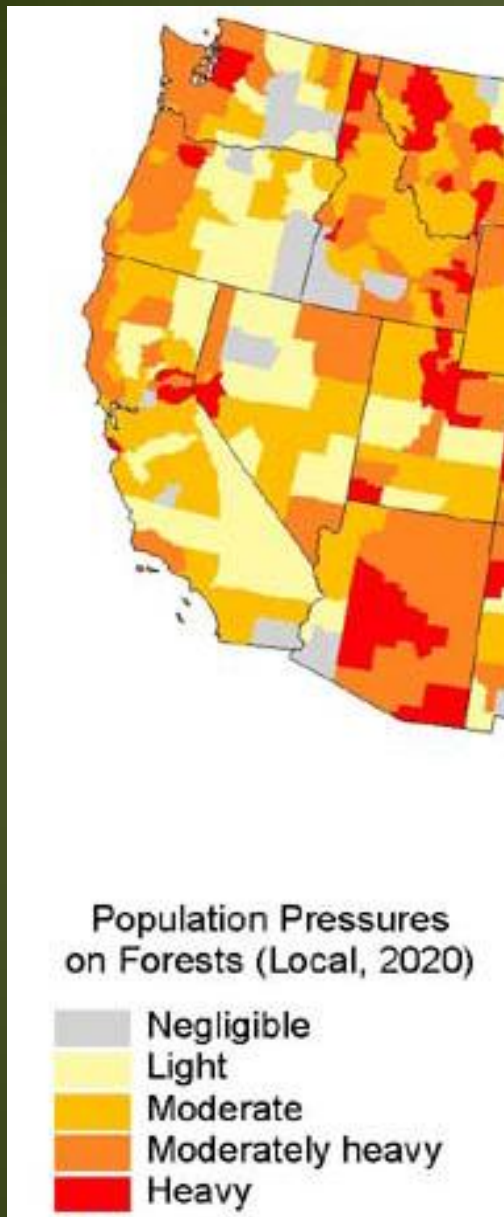
# Hotspots

Hotspots can occur where human activity and public land collide.

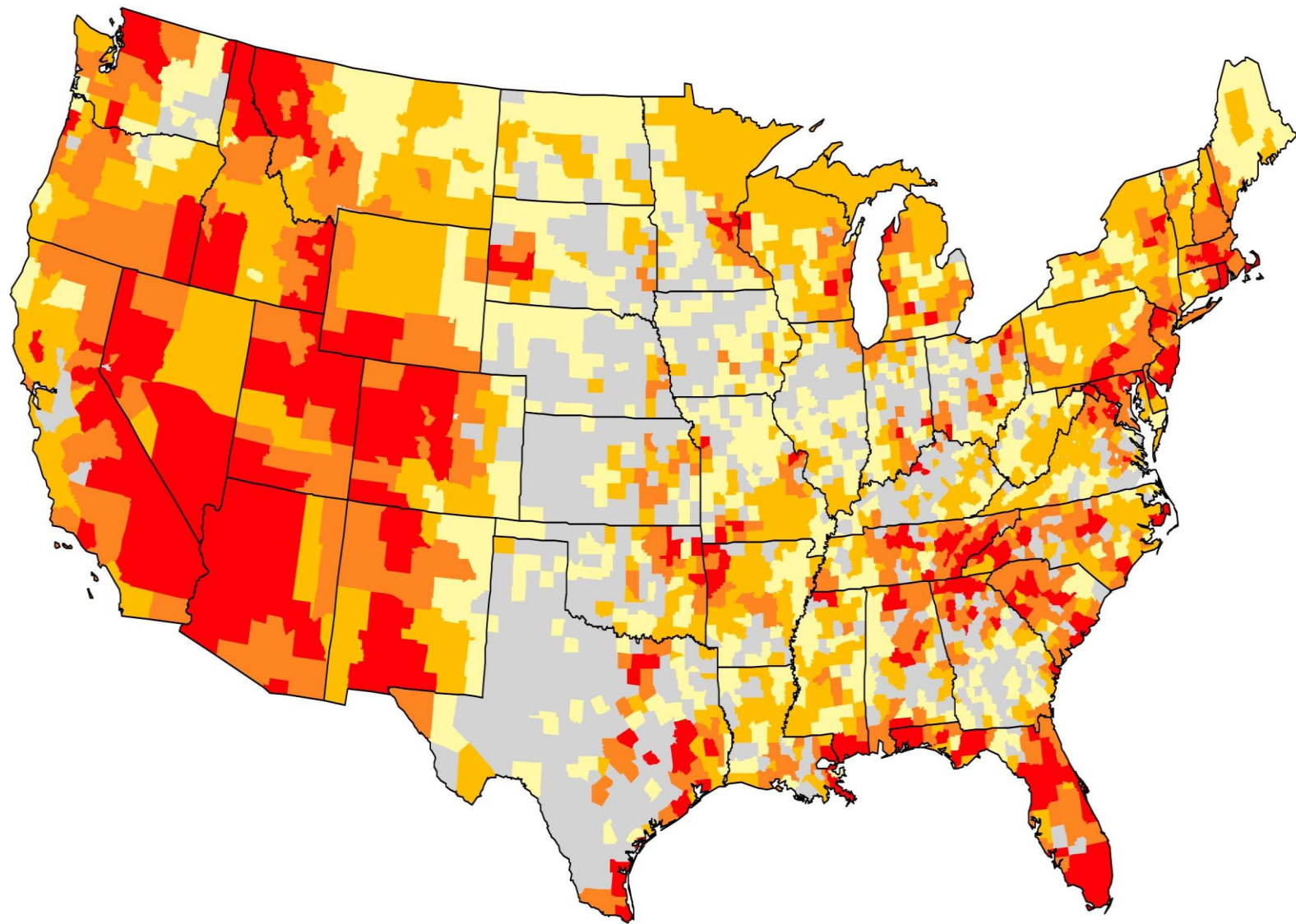
Projections of 2020 “hotspots” were made for all counties in the lower 48 states.

Social Pressure, on public land resources comes from:

- **Population density**
- **Economic potential and activity**
- **Outdoor Recreation Demand**

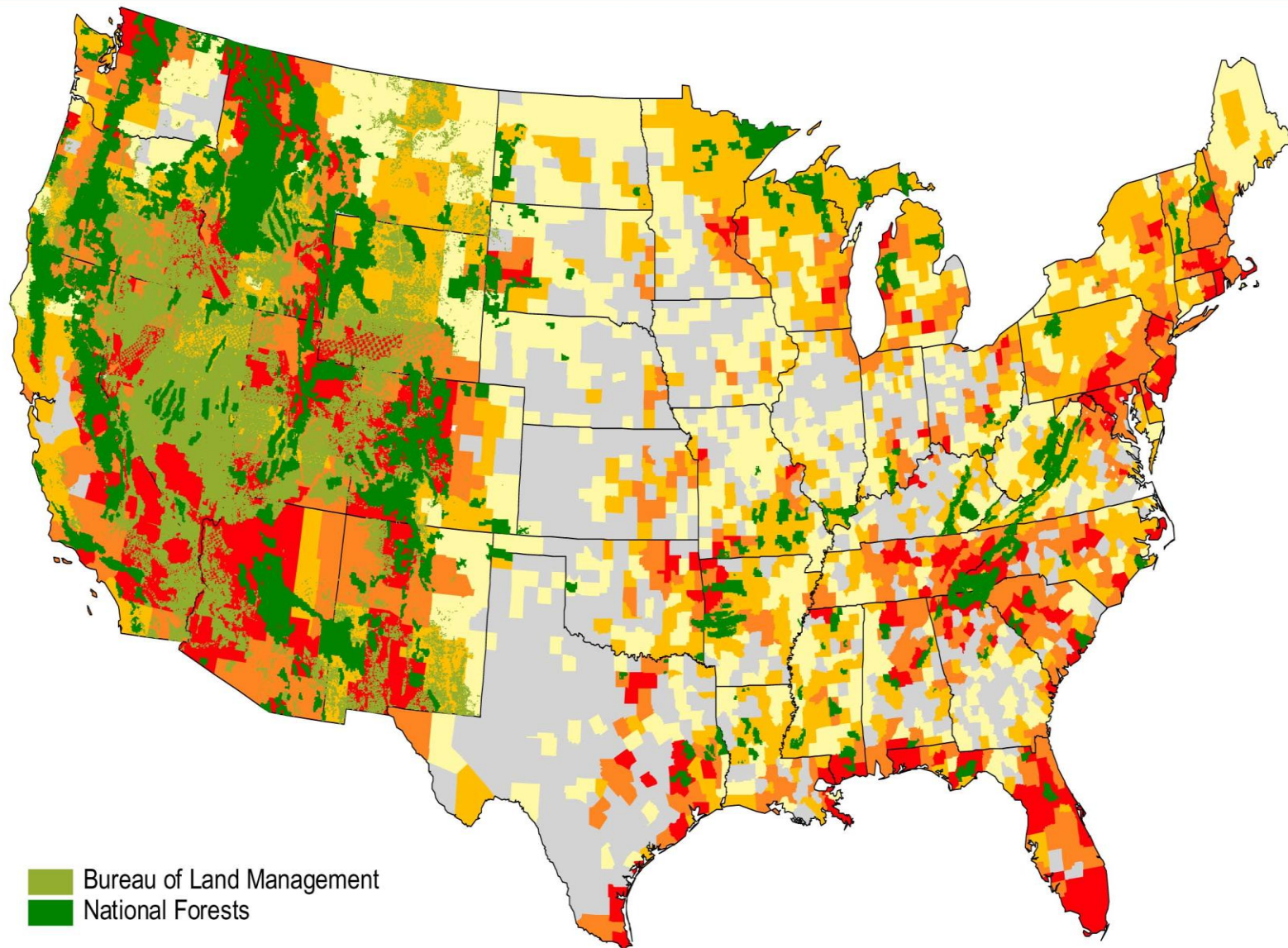


USDA FS, Southern Research Station, Hotspots.



## PROJECTED 2020 RECREATION HOTSPOTS





 Bureau of Land Management  
 National Forests

 Negligible  
 Light  
 Moderate  
 Moderately heavy  
 Heavy

## PROJECTED 2020 RECREATION HOTSPOTS AND PUBLIC LANDS PROXIMITY

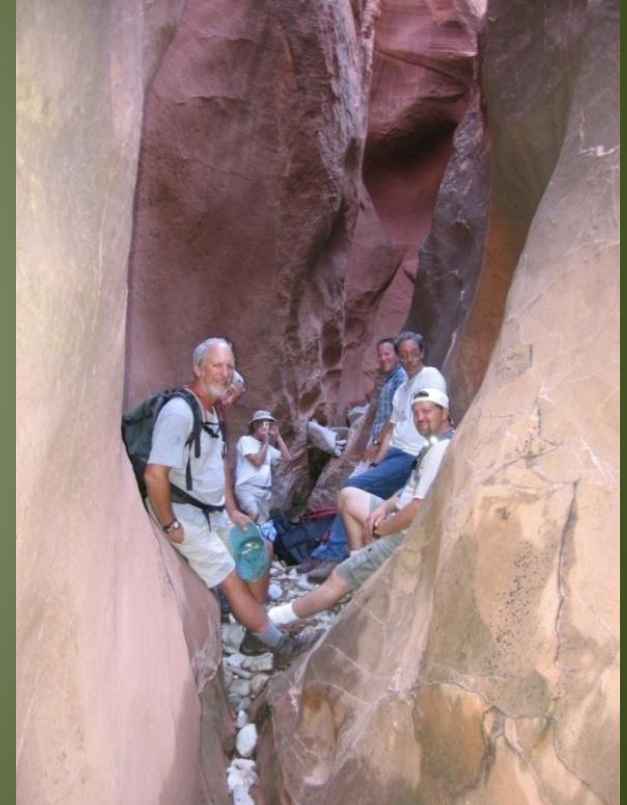
# Over the past decade there has been a fundamental shift and evolution in approach to both natural resources and recreation planning and management

- Concept of Environmental Services
- Concept of Benefits or outcomes-based management for recreation (BBM)

Both models emphasize a shift from an activity-based approach to one which focuses on the **environmental, social and economic** values, services, benefits that flow from the public lands.

**Paradigm shift from –**

**“balancing multiple use” to “sustaining multiple outcomes”**



## *Outcomes -Based Approaches share key elements:*

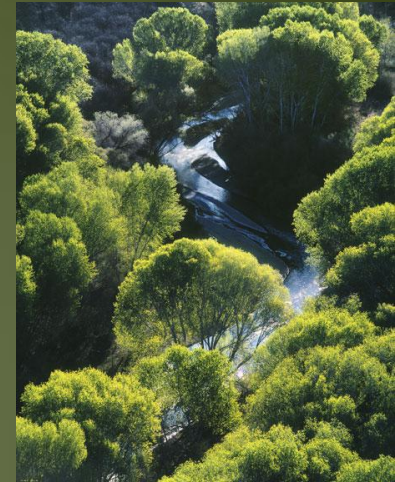


- ★ Encourages regional & landscape level planning
- ★ Recognizes factors and support for sustainability and ecosystem function
- ★ Provides a framework to better involve the public and define expectations for land uses or recreation experiences
- ★ Engages communities and fosters long-term partnerships with public & private providers
- ★ Improves the long-term management of settings, facilities and public access



# Ecosystem Services and Outcomes-based Management Share Similar Approaches

- 1) *“Begin with the end in mind”* focuses on services and benefits outcomes including social, economic and environmental
- 2) *“What do people want or need?”* – Engages public prior to or during analyses and assessments for scenario development
- 3) *“What is going on out there?”* – Requires baseline data collection, environmental and social (Ecosystem) assessments
- 4) *“What is connected and what is its value?”* – Requires valuation and understanding inter-relationships
- 5) *“What are the effects and trade-offs?”* - Considers long-term impacts and tradeoffs through integrated risk assessment
- 6) *“Management is an art not a science”* – Recognizes change in ecosystem and social demands requires adaptive approaches and collaboration in management to manage risks



*Goal:  
Sustaining Public Lands  
Recreation Resources and Services to  
Enrich Individual and Community Life*

*Challenge:  
Doing so in context of other land uses  
and while protecting natural and cultural resources*





# RECREATIONAL SETTING CHARACTER CONDITIONS

We know that people seek a variety of experiences --  
BLM provides settings that make those experiences possible.

PRIMITIVE

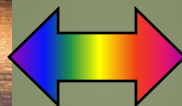
BACKCOUNTRY

MIDDLE COUNTRY

FRONT COUNTRY

RURAL

URBAN



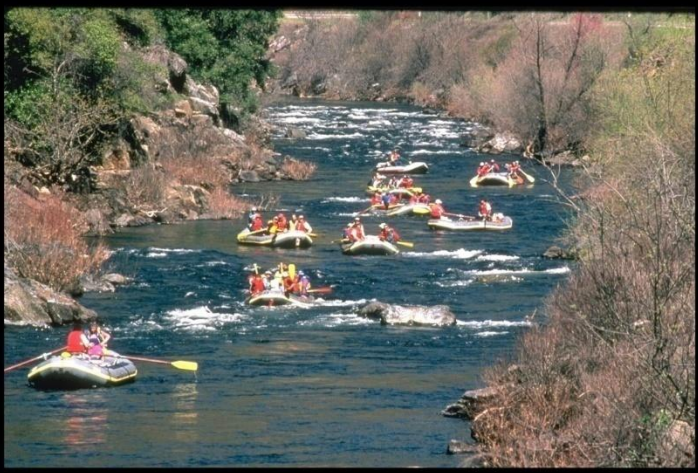
BLM can take actions to create, maintain or enhance desired future conditions and provide prescriptions (RSCCs) for physical, social and operational settings.

BLM can also take actions that can enhance experiences through supporting information, facilities and services.





Oooh Aahhh...



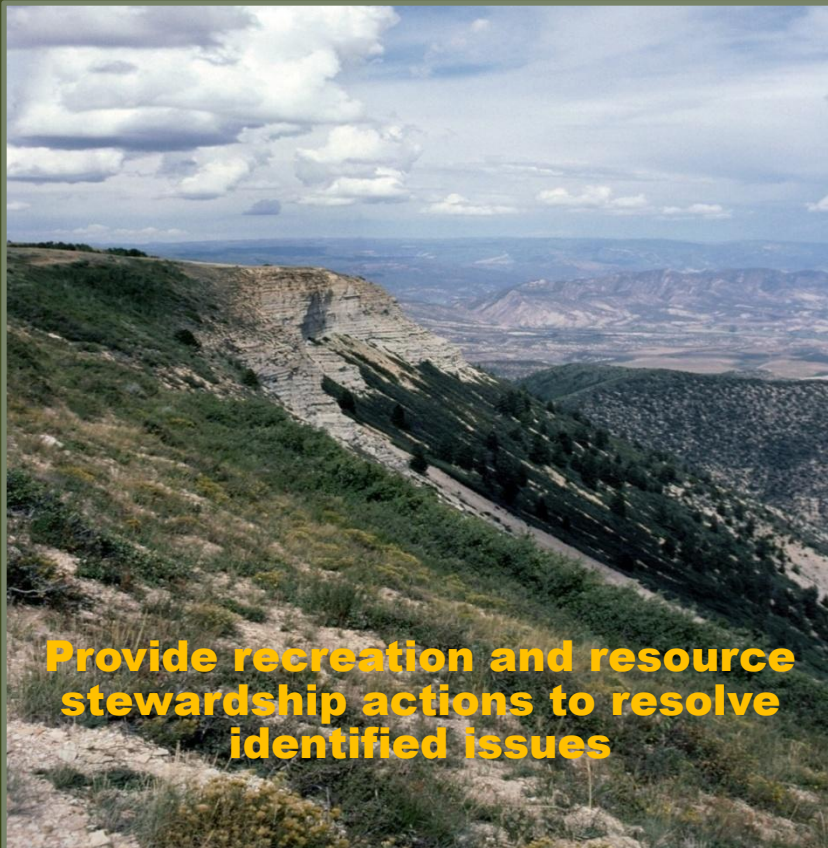
Oh oh...



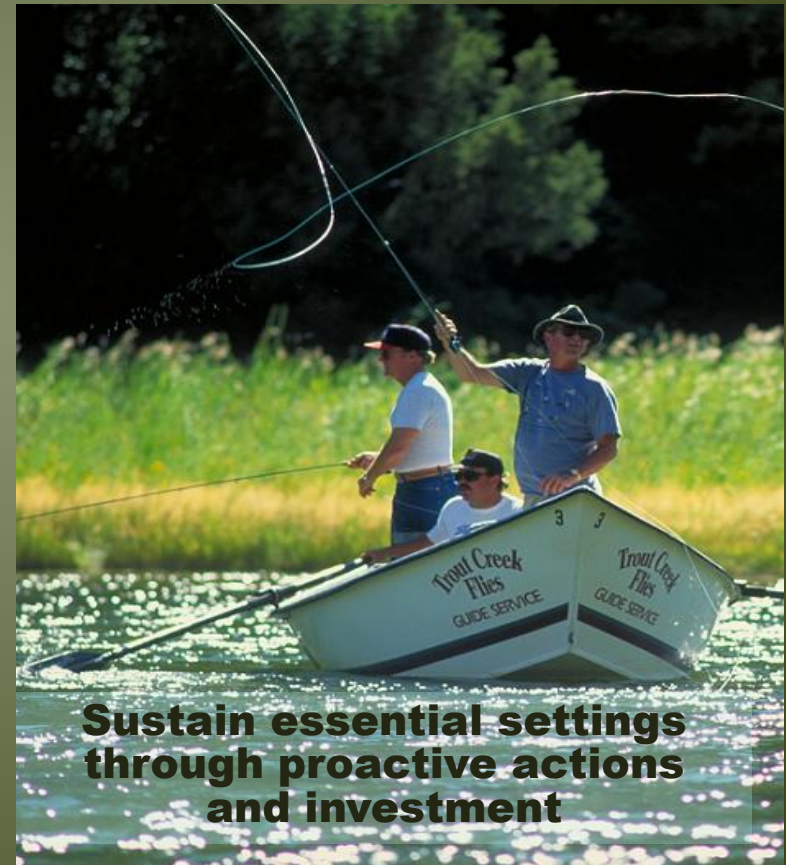
Oh NO!

# **BLM has two distinct strategies for managing Recreation and Visitor Services through Designation/Identification Two Types of Recreation Areas**

## **Extensive Recreation Management Areas**



## **Special Recreation Management Areas**





# Current Recreation Planning Guidance, Tools and Strategies

- Appendix C
- IM 2008-090 Recreation Planning Checklist
- IM 2006-043 Strategy for Implementing Recreation Priorities
- NTC Course 8300-11 Recreation Planning: Effective Engagement in Land Use Planning
- Programmatic Strategic Plans (Purple book, OHV etc)





# Why is Recreation so much more complicated in the LUP handbook?

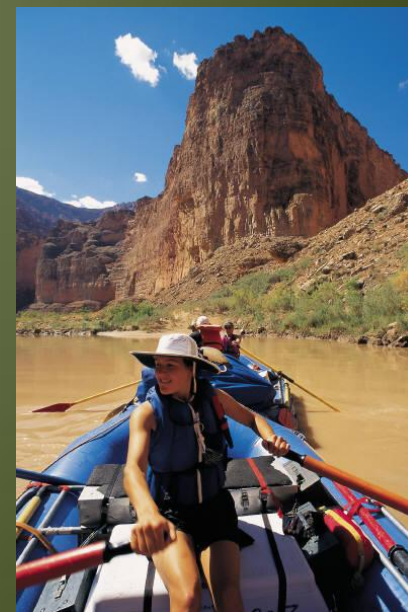
- LUP Handbook guidance was developed quickly and before outdated program manual and handbooks were to be updated
- No separate CFR or Laws (e.g. Cultural, ESA acts) to help guide management parameters for recreation
- No required consultation or coordination with other entities to guide collaboration
- Attempted to advance new and evolving outcomes based management (BBM) framework
- Seemed like a good idea at the time...

# Good News for Planners and the Recreation Program Staff

- Opportunity to revise and improve Recreation Planning Manual & Handbook to provide detailed guidance or “How to”
- Opportunity to update and change LUP Handbook Appendix C to clarify and simplify guidance based on new M&H
- Need your input and ideas

# Lessons Learned From the Interpretation of Appendix C: Challenges in implementing BBM

- ❖ Difficulty in applying academic theory to real life settings and confusing terminology (e.g. “marketing”, “market-based strategy”)
- ❖ Complexity of BBM concept and the level of information needed and the detail of actions to be addressed in LUP was not sufficiently specified (e.g. RMZs, Niches, setting character)
- ❖ Appendix C is not clear on what decisions should be land use (RMP) level decisions vs. implementation level decisions
- ❖ SRMAs were not “designated” and EMRAs were not adequately addressed – custodial management does not mean “benign neglect”





# Opportunity for input for proposed changes

- Draft Recreation Planning Manual and Handbook is being developed now (final draft by FY10)
- Appendix C will be updated to reflect the manual and handbook changes (when planning handbook is updated or through IM transmitting the new M&H)
- Goal is to create a functional and viable recreation planning process that:
  - Managers, visitors, other land users/interests, and partners can understand and simplifies guidance
  - FO ORP's can consistently implement *to ensure customer satisfaction and long-term setting protection.*
  - Integrates & coordinates programs such as VRM and Travel Management (social/human habitat), so they are complimentary and
  - Addresses human issues affecting other programs' environmental (habitat, cultural etc.) and economic (energy) resource management needs



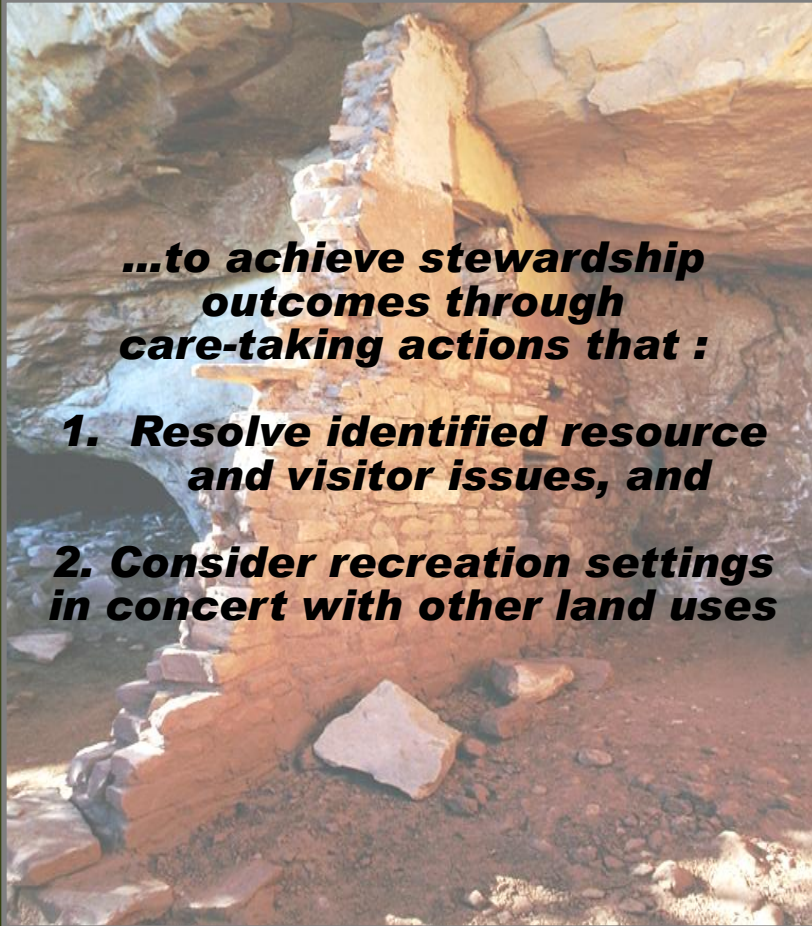
*Policy development is an adaptive process too.....*

# **BLM Achieves These Goals by Managing Recreation and Visitor Services Program Resources...**

## **Within Extensive Recreation Management Areas :**

***...to achieve stewardship outcomes through care-taking actions that :***

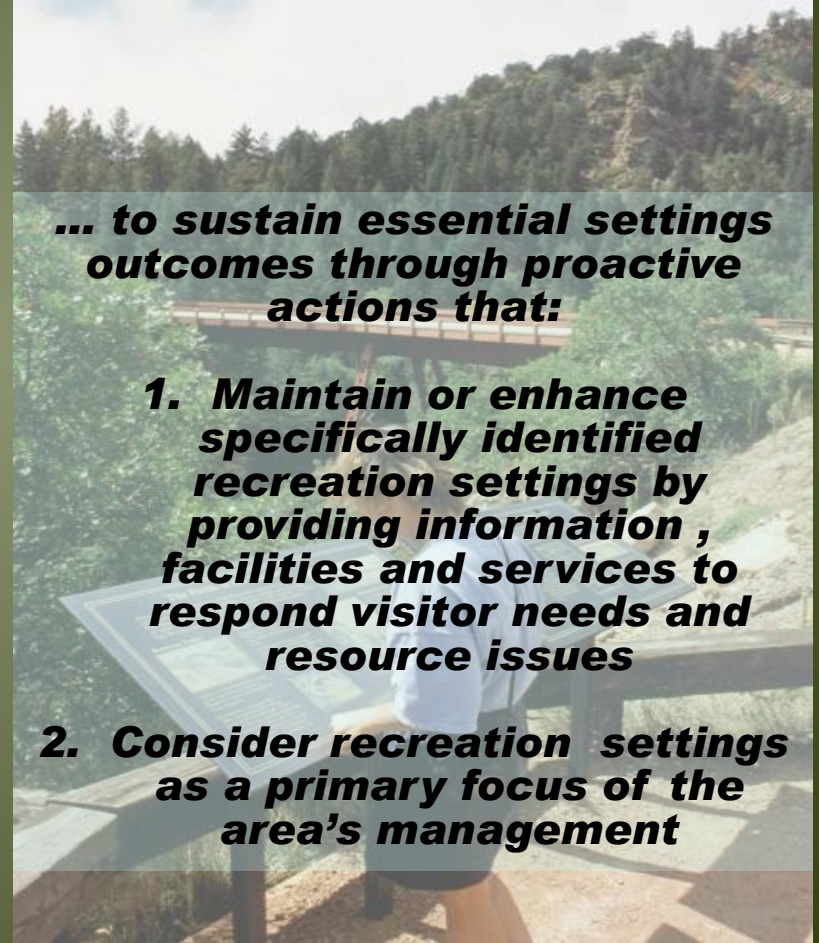
- 1. Resolve identified resource and visitor issues, and***
- 2. Consider recreation settings in concert with other land uses***



## **Within Special Recreation Management Areas :**

***... to sustain essential settings outcomes through proactive actions that:***

- 1. Maintain or enhance specifically identified recreation settings by providing information , facilities and services to respond visitor needs and resource issues***
- 2. Consider recreation settings as a primary focus of the area's management***







# Proposed SRMA Definition



- \* **Designated** administrative units established and managed for specific recreation opportunities.
- \* **Areas where a significant commitment** has been made to provide specific recreation settings and experience opportunities on a sustained or enhanced, long-term basis.
- \* **Has management prescriptions** identified by a set of recreation setting character conditions (RSCC) and defined level of supporting development (ROS, facilities).
- \* **Identifies other management actions and allowable uses** in the RMP that guide, limit, restrict or mitigate other potentially affecting programs and uses to protect essential attributes needed to achieve identified recreation opportunity outcomes
- \* At a minimum a RMP must define **Why and for Whom** a SRMA is needed



# Proposed ERMA Definition

- ❖ **Identified** areas that offer recreation opportunities that facilitate the visitors' freedom to pursue a variety of outdoor recreation activities (attain outcomes).
- ❖ **Commitment is limited** to stewardship or custodial level of management that may provide defined (focused) but general or dispersed recreation opportunities objectives or actions that address issues.
- ❖ **Areas may be managed for other priorities** and in coordination with other land uses or resource management objectives as recreation may not be the primary or predominant land management focus.
- ❖ **At a minimum recreation setting issues should be considered in establishing other programs allowable uses and restrictive or mitigating actions (the same as habitat, cultural and other resource values).**





# Land Use Planning Level Decisions

Once SRMAs and ERMAs are designated/identified, there are only two elemental types of Land Use Plan Decisions for recreation:

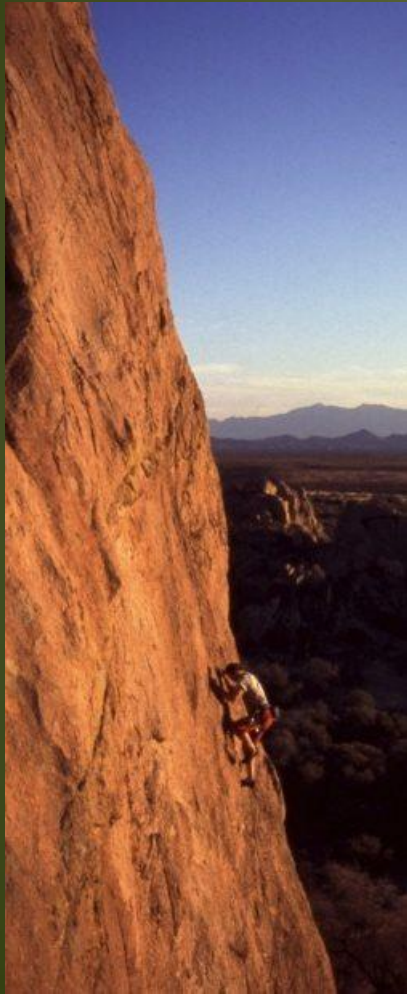
- 1) Defined Desired Outcomes (goals and objectives based on RSCCs)
- 2) Related Allowable Uses and Management Actions.

To ensure prescribed setting character conditions are maintained:

- ❖ At a minimum LUPs must identify Allowable Uses and Management Actions to protect/maintain the essential physical, social and operational RSCC attributes.



# Questions on Recreation Land Use Level Decisions



- ✓ Is the determination of a **detailed** primary recreation-tourism market strategy (destination, community, undeveloped) required for an SRMA?
- ✓ Should a SRMA **recreation niche** (primary recreation market ) be a LUP-level decision? Or should it be added to the “implementation actions”
- ✓ Are prescribed **Recreation Setting Character Conditions** (RSCC) LUP-level decisions or do they only portray the Desired Future Conditions of the SRMA?
- ✓ What level of **detail is required** for identifying “primary market-based strategy” or “Recreation Management Zones (RMZs)”?
- ✓ What does **custodial level** management for ERMA's mean?



# Land Use Plans and Implementation Plans Therefore Should Identify **Essential Actions** Needed to Provide “Critical Recreation Habitat”...

## Within Extensive Recreation Management Areas :

☐ **RMPs must identify Stewardship Objectives that Resolve Identified Care-Taking Issues**

☐ **Implementing Actions to Achieve the Above**

**Protestable**

**Land Use Plan Decisions**

**Implementation Decisions**

**Appealable**

## Within Special Recreation Management Areas :

☐ **Recreation management objectives that explain **WHY** and for **Whom** the SRMA should be designated. By generally defining essential character conditions, services , facilities and visitor/resident desired outcomes**

• **Implementing Specific Actions needed to maintain or enhance essential Setting Conditions**

• **Frameworks to be Engaged (allocation systems, fees, joint management partnerships, information)**

# RECREATIONAL SETTING CHARACTER CONDITIONS

## Actions to Address the **PHYSICAL** Qualities of the Landscape

RSCC Attribute	Possible Action
<b>Remoteness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify Right-of-Way Avoidance or Exclusion Areas</li> <li>• Identify Right-of-Way Corridors</li> <li>• Identify Existing and Potential Development Areas for Renewable Energy Projects</li> <li>• Identify Areas that are Available or Closed to Timber Harvest or Special Forest Product Harvest</li> <li>• Close Designation of Off-Highway Vehicle Management Areas</li> <li>• Revise Limited Travel Designations for Types or Modes of Travel (inc. Foot, Equestrian, Bicycle)</li> <li>• Apply Seasonal Travel Restrictions</li> <li>• Close Areas to Over-the-Snow Travel</li> <li>• Require Administrative Use Agreements for Permittees</li> </ul>
<b>Naturalness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply No Surface Occupancy / No Surface-disturbing Activity Stipulation</li> <li>• Apply Controlled Surface Use Stipulation</li> <li>• Identify Areas Open and Closed to Oil and Gas Leasing</li> <li>• Designate Visual Resource Management Classes</li> <li>• Identify Areas Open or Closed to Mineral Material Disposal (Salable Minerals)</li> <li>• Identify Areas Open or Closed to Non-Energy Leasable Mineral Leasing and Development</li> <li>• Recommend Areas for Closure to Locatable Mineral Exploration/Development</li> <li>• Propose Existing Withdrawals to be Continued, Modified or Revoked</li> <li>• Identify Right-of-Way Avoidance or Exclusion Areas</li> <li>• Identify Right-of-Way Corridors</li> <li>• Identify Existing and Potential Development Areas for Renewable Energy Projects</li> <li>• Identify Areas that are Available or Closed to Timber Harvest or Special Forest Product Harvest</li> <li>• Identify Lands Available or Not Available for Livestock Grazing</li> <li>• Identify Lands that are Acceptable for Coal Leasing and Development and Those that are Not</li> <li>• Identify the Geographic Areas that are Suitable for Wildland Fire Use</li> <li>• Identify Restrictions on Fire Management Practices</li> <li>• Identify Decisions to Protect or Preserve Wilderness Characteristics</li> </ul>
<b>Visitor Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the Construction or Removal of Recreation Facilities and Trails</li> <li>• Identify the Use of RSCCs or VRM to Guide the Type, Nature, or Form of Recreation Facilities</li> <li>• Identify Decisions to Protect or Preserve Wilderness Characteristics</li> </ul>

# RECREATIONAL SETTING CHARACTER CONDITIONS

## Actions to Address the **SOCIAL** Qualities of Use

RSCC Attribute	Possible Action
<b>Contacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employ a Permit System</li><li>• Identify Special Area designations for the Purpose of Individual Special Recreation Permits</li><li>• Place Limitations on Commercial, Competitive, or Organized Group Special Recreation Permits</li><li>• Revise Travel Designations</li><li>• Place Timing limitations on Other Resource Uses</li></ul>
<b>Group Size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employ Public Group Size Limitations</li><li>• Issue Individual SRPs</li><li>• Place Group Size Limitations on Commercial, Competitive, or Organized Group SRPs</li></ul>
<b>Evidence Of Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify Designated Camping Areas</li><li>• Identify Closures to Camping</li><li>• Identify Areas for Firearm Use Restrictions – Closure to Target Shooting</li><li>• Require the Use of Fire Pans for Campfires</li><li>• Require the Use of Portable Stoves – No Open Fires</li><li>• Human Waste Carry-out Requirement</li></ul>



# RECREATIONAL SETTING CHARACTER CONDITIONS

## Actions to Address the **OPERATIONAL** Conditions Created by Management

RSCC Attribute	Possible Action
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify Right-of-Way Avoidance or Exclusion Areas</li><li>• Identify Right-of-Way Corridors</li><li>• Identify Existing and Potential Development Areas for Renewable Energy Projects</li><li>• Apply Closure to Wood Cutting and Commercial Timber Harvest</li><li>• Designation of Off-Highway Vehicle Management Areas</li><li>• Revise Limited Travel Designations for Types or Modes of Travel (inc. Foot, Equestrian, Bicycle)</li><li>• Close and Rehabilitate Roads and Trails</li><li>• Apply Seasonal Travel Restrictions</li><li>• Close Areas to Over-the-Snow Travel</li></ul>
Visitor Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase Field Staff</li><li>• Develop or Stop Creating Brochures, Maps, Webpages, etc.</li><li>• Install or Limit Directional or Informational Signage</li></ul>
Management Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Add/Remove Supplementary Rules, Use Restrictions, Limitations or Closures</li><li>• Identify Limitations on Camping</li><li>• Identify Areas for Firearm Use Restrictions – Closure to Target Shooting</li><li>• Charge/Eliminate Use Fees</li><li>• Human Waste Carry-out Requirement</li></ul>

# Moving Forward with Planning for Recreation & Visitor Services

- BLM is not abandoning BBM, but rather seeking a solution to make a fundamentally sound concept functionally operational by integrating outcome focused planning and management within our resource planning system and processes.
- These changes should be consistent and complementary with Ecosystem Services approaches and will help us better integrate recreation into landscape level resource planning.
- Helps protect landscape elements and integrates outcomes-based principles into the management of ERMA's which form the majority of the National System of Public Lands and also offer highly valued dispersed recreation opportunities.





